

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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TAGS: PFOR, OGEN, YO

SUBJECT: YUGOSLAV PRESS CAMPAIGN

REF: BELGRADE 1122 AND PREVIOUS, STATE 50635

SUMMARY: YUGOSLAV PRESS CAMPAIGN BASED ON LJUBLJANA
CAMP COUNSELOR INTERVIEWS CONTINUES WITH PROMINENT
ARTICLE IN ZAGREB WEEKLY VUS. VUS AGAIN LISTS
ALLEGED QUESTIONS POSED BY INTERVIEWERS WHO
ARE NAMED. END SUMMARY.

1. MARCH 21 EDITION WEEKLY MAGAZINE " VJESNIK U SRIJEDU"
(VUS) INCLUDES FEATURE ARTICLE " ROTTEN EGGS FOR AMERICA"
ON LJUBLJANA CAMP COUNSELOR INTERVIEWS. ARTICLE BY JOZA
VLAHOVIC, PLAYED AS LEAD COVER STORY, COVERING NEARLY
THREE FULL PAGES (7-9).

2. VUS STORY MOST DETAILED TO DATE, WITH INTRODUCTORY
BACKGROUND OF PROGRAM, AND HIGHLIGHTED BY INTERVIEWS WITH
STUDENT JANEZ ZUPAN, WHO WAS PRESENT AT INTERVIEWS IN
CAPACITY OF CO- ORGANIZER FOR LJUBLJANA STUDENT UNION
AND FORMER PARTICIPANT IN PROGRAM. TOMAZ KSELA, PRESIDENT OF
UNION OF LJUBLJANA AND SLOVENIAN STUDENTS, WHO SIGNED PROTEST
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LETTER ALSO INTERVIEWED AS WAS JOZE KRSINAR, STUDENT LEAGUE OF SLOVENIA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBER. ARTICLE INCLUDES NAMES OF AMERICAN INTERVIEWERS AND HEADLINES ONE SECTION OF STORY RELATING TO INTERVIEWERS' QUESTIONS: " WHAT DID MISTER MILES ASK?" (MILES IDENTIFIED AS EMBASSY OFFICER.)

3. IN RESPONSE TO VLAHOVIC' S INQUIRIES ZUPAN ACKNOWLEDGES QUESTIONS OF NATURE REPORTED BY VUS ASKED, BUT EMPHASIZED ROLE PLAYING IN RELAXED CONVERSATIONAL ATMOSPHERE, AND CITES PURPOSE OF QUESTIONING AS RELATING TO POSSIBLE DISCUSSIONS WITH U. S. CAMP CHILDREN. HOWEVER, ADMITS THAT DURING HIS OWN CAMP COUNSELOR DAYS IN U. S. ONLY ONE CHILD, A YOUNG HARLEM BLACK, ASKED ABOUT COMMUNISM. ZUPAN ALSO STATED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER ANY OF 50 SELECTED CANDIDATES WERE COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERS SINCE THAT QUESTION WAS NEVER ASKED. KRSINAR STRESSED THAT STUDENT COUNCIL WAS NOT AGAINST CC PROGRAM, NOR GENERAL QUESTIONING IN INTERVIEWS BUT ONLY OPPOSED SUCH " INCORRECT QUESTIONING."

4. VUS ARTICLE NOTES INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED LAST THREE YEARS " WITH SATISFACTION ON BOTH SIDES," ALTHOUGH VLAHOVIC ADMITS " IT I PRESUMED "
" THAT DURING PAST YEARS / INCORRECT QUESTIONS" WERE ALSO ASKED IN SIMILAR INTERVIEWS, BUT " THIS YEAR IN NEW SOCIAL CLIMATE, INCIDENT LIKE THIS COULD NOT PASS UNNOTICED."

5. VUS ADMITS THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF STUDENT COMMITTEE ALWAYS PRESENT DURING INTERVIEWS AND THEN ATTEMPTS TO EXPLAIN WHY TWO MONTHS PASSED BEFORE ACTION TAKEN ON " INCORRECT CONDUCT" OF INTERVIEWERS. ARTICLE STATES STUDENT OFFICIALS WERE " WRONGLY INFORMED" AT FIRST, THEN LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS AND MEETINGS HELD TO DETERMINE COURSE OF ACTION BEFORE FINAL DECISION TO SEND PROTEST LETTER AND SUSPEND PROGRAM FOR THIS YEAR.

6. REPRODUCTION FACSIMILE FIRST PAGE OF STUDENT PROTEST LETTER TO U. S. EMBASSY INCLUDED UNDER HEADLINE OF VUS STORY. FACSIMILE INCLUDES NEITHER MILD PROTEST NOR CONCLUDING STATEMENT EXPRESSING WISH TO CONTINUE COOPERATION WITH EMBASSY IN THIS AND SIMILAR PROGRAMS; BOTH OF WHICH APPEARED SECOND PAGE.

7. ARTICLE HAS ITS HUMOROUS SIDE, MENTIONING THAT SOME INTERVIEWS LASTED A FEW MINUTES WHILE OTHERS LASTED MUCH LONGER; VUS QUOTES ONE STUDENT WHO OBSERVED A PRETTY GIRL EMERGE FROM A FORTY- FIVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MINUTE SESSION SAYING " THAT' S A REALLY PRETTY GIRL, I COULD

INTERVIEW HER FOR A LONG TIME MYSELF." AND THE " ROTTEN EGGS"
TITLE OF THE ARTICLE COMES FROM THE REPEATED ANSWER OF APPLICANTS
THAT THE YUGOSLAV CHILDRENS' GAME THEY COULD SHOW THE CAMPERS WAS
/ROTTEN EGGS". ONE INTERVIEWER FINALLY SAID, " ROTTEN EGGS,
DON' T YOU YUGOSLAVS KNOW ANYTHING ELSE."

8. COMMENT: WHILE PROMINENT PLACE GIVEN ARTICLE IN LARGE CIRCULATION
VUS IS UNFORTUNATE, COVERAGE WAS EXPECTED IN FIRST PLAY BY WEEKLY,
AND COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE. NO QUARTER IS GIVEN ON
ISSUE OF WHICH QUESTIONS WERE ACTUALLY ASKED. EVEN
ZUPAN, WHO HAS CONFIRMED TO USIC DIRECTOR COONROD THAT SUCH
CRUDE QUESTIONS WERE NOT ASKED, HAS HAD TO AGREE WITH " SPIRIT
IF NOT LETTER" OF QUESTIONS CITED BY VUS. BUT ZUPAN HAS DONE BEST
TO DEFEND PROGRAM AND VUS DOES PUT SHARE OF RESPONSIBILITY ON
STUDENT ORGANIZERS. WHILE ALL INTERVIEWEERS NAMED, EMBASSY
DOES NOT KNOW WHY " MISTER MILES" SIGLED OUT FOR PARTICULAR
MENTION.

9. DCM AND PAO WILL CALL ON FONOFF DIRECTOR KREACIC AND
SECINFO BUDIMOVSKI AGAIN TO PROTEST CONTINUING NATURE OF
PRESS CAMPAIGN.
TOON

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